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News4 Investigates: Former inmate, NAACP call treatment at Trousdale 'inhumane'



Trousdale Turner Correctional Center in Hartsville, TN. (WSMV)

By [Caresse Jackman](#)

Updated: Feb. 16, 2022 at 8:15 PM CST

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (WSMV) - From medical issues to alleged beatings, the NAACP and families of inmates say conditions at Trousdale Turner Correctional Center are out of control.

"I've never seen that many people die in one place," Edward Shelton said.

In the more than 10 years that Edward Shelton served time at Trousdale Turner Correctional Center, he thought he'd be one of them.

"I was urinating blood. They said it wasn't an emergency," Shelton said.

'Inhumane' complaints raised against CoreCivic at Trousdale facility



Shelton said he became ill, suffering from kidney problems, high blood pressure, and stomach issues. Shelton said no matter how many times he told officials there about his medical issues nothing happened. It's why his mother Darlene Carruthers-Shelton said she wants to shine a light on what happened to her son.

"Just because someone is incarcerated, it doesn't mean that they need to be mistreated," Carruthers-Shelton said.

Edward Shelton's story is just one of several sitting on the NAACP's table. Officials with the NAACP say they've heard from several families.

"I would say, oh my goodness, 65 nearly 70 complaints. Just since October," NAACP Prison Branch Chair Dr. Pamela Harrison said.

Dr. Harrison said the complaints range from alleged beatings to people not getting their medication or medical care while behind bars. It's what spurred the NAACP to hold a press conference back in November.

"We're not talking about people who will never be released. We are talking about people who, the majority of them are at some point going to be coming back to society," Sheryl Guinn, President of the NAACP Nashville Branch, said.

The NAACP is calling for attention from Washington D.C.

"We as the United States have taken on a role to have a prison system, which means our position is that we want to rehabilitate. That's the whole purpose of a prison. You are not rehabilitating someone by not giving them health treatment."

News4 Investigates reached out to Trousdale's owner and operator, CoreCivic for an on-camera interview. They provided the following statement:

Caresse,

Thank you for reaching out to us with your inquiry. Feel free to use the following statement, attributable to me, for your reporting.

CoreCivic has a detailed Human Rights Policy that clearly outlines our commitments regarding inmate rights and treatment, including legal rights, safety and security, healthcare, reentry programming, visitation and standards of living. Every one of our colleagues at CoreCivic are trained on this policy before their first day of work.

In November 2021, the NAACP made claims about Trousdale Turner Correctional Center (TTCC) that were unsubstantiated, inaccurate, and misinformed. We're not aware of any concerns raised by the NAACP regarding TTCC since then, but strongly encourage them to share any specific claims with the facility so that we can properly investigate.

In both policy and practice, CoreCivic respects the dignity of every individual entrusted to our care. We have clear lines of communication for those in our care to make concerns known without fear of repercussions, including in-facility reporting, a company-wide hotline accessible anonymously internally and externally, and direct access to our government partners.

While privacy laws prevent us from discussing an individual's specific medical conditions, we stand by our previous statement that TTCC provides all of those in our care with comprehensive medical and mental health care. Furthermore, TTCC is monitored very closely by our government partners at the Tennessee Department of Correction, who employ two, full-time, on-site contract monitors at TTCC who work to ensure our full compliance with prescribed policies and procedures.

TTCC is also subject to multiple layers of oversight from our government partner and independent third parties like the American Correctional Association (ACA). That oversight includes both scheduled and unscheduled inspections of our operations. We're proud to say TTCC has been recommended for reaccreditation by the ACA following a rigorous, on-site inspection earlier this month in which independent inspectors gave the facility scores of 100% on mandatory standards and 98.4% on non-mandatory standards. The ACA reviews more than 400 standards of correctional management, including healthcare and other services around standards of living and safety.

Very Respectfully,

Matthew Davio

Public Affairs Manager

CoreCivic

"There is no way that any of us would waste our time to bring this information to the rest of our society to our community if it wasn't true," Guinn said.

"What if your son, daughter, nephew came to that place and it happened to them, and was treated that way, how would you feel!!" Dr. Harrison said.

A feeling Carruthers-Shelton knows well, and one she would not wish on anyone else.

"It just saddens me and angers me that they would treat our loved ones like that and be allowed to still be operating," Carruthers-Shelton said.

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